

# Somerset Rivers Authority

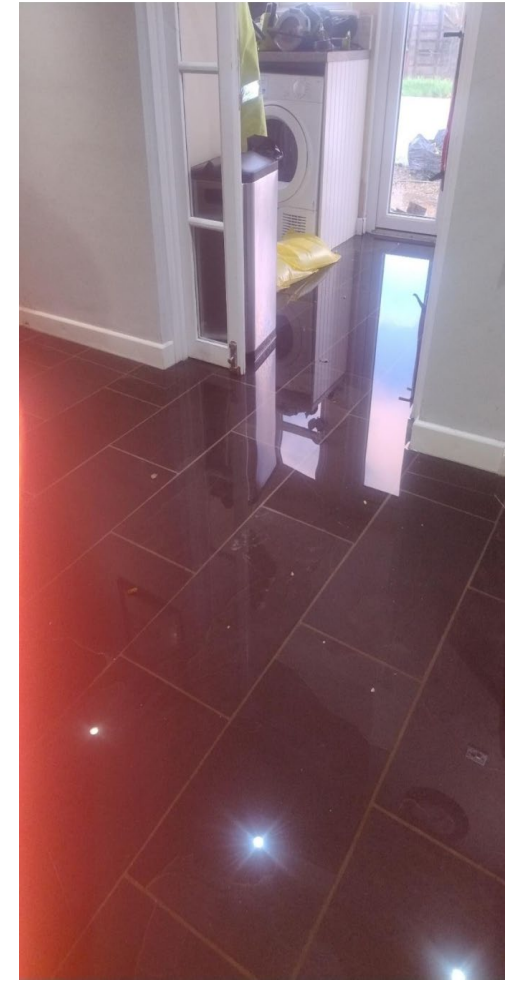
The logo graphic consists of three curved, parallel lines that sweep upwards from left to right, positioned below the text.

Storm Chandra flooding January – February 2026  
Update to SRA Board 20 March 2026

"We were helpless," said James. "It was coming up through the air bricks, going through the laminate floor, the carpet. There was nothing we could do, we just had to let Mother Nature take its course." (Source BBC)



Severn Drive, Taunton  
27<sup>th</sup> January 2026



North Curry  
27<sup>th</sup> January 2026

# Burrowbridge, January 2026



# Huish Episcopi, near Langport, January 2026



# Community Preparedness Examples

15:08 27 January

## 'Flood aid group's biggest test so far'

Ilminster Mayor Brian Hamilton has been out this morning, helping residents affected by the floods.

He said the overnight rain presented the town's flood aid group with its biggest test so far.



## Ilminster impacts:

5 internally flooded properties in Ilminster  
7 park homes which were evacuated due to the water around the park, but not inside the properties themselves

Ilminster Area Resilience Group helps those impacted by flooding



## Flood Wardens

- Volunteer role.
- Vital link between a community, Environment Agency and other agencies.
- Provide advice and support in their communities.
- Coordinate local action.



## Ilminster Town Council has over the last two years:

- developed a town emergency plan
- set up a team of volunteers
- Identified places of safety

# Contents

- Countywide overview of causes and impacts
- Overview of the joint response by the Risk Management Authorities
- Immediate lessons identified
- Initial considerations for SRA and Partners



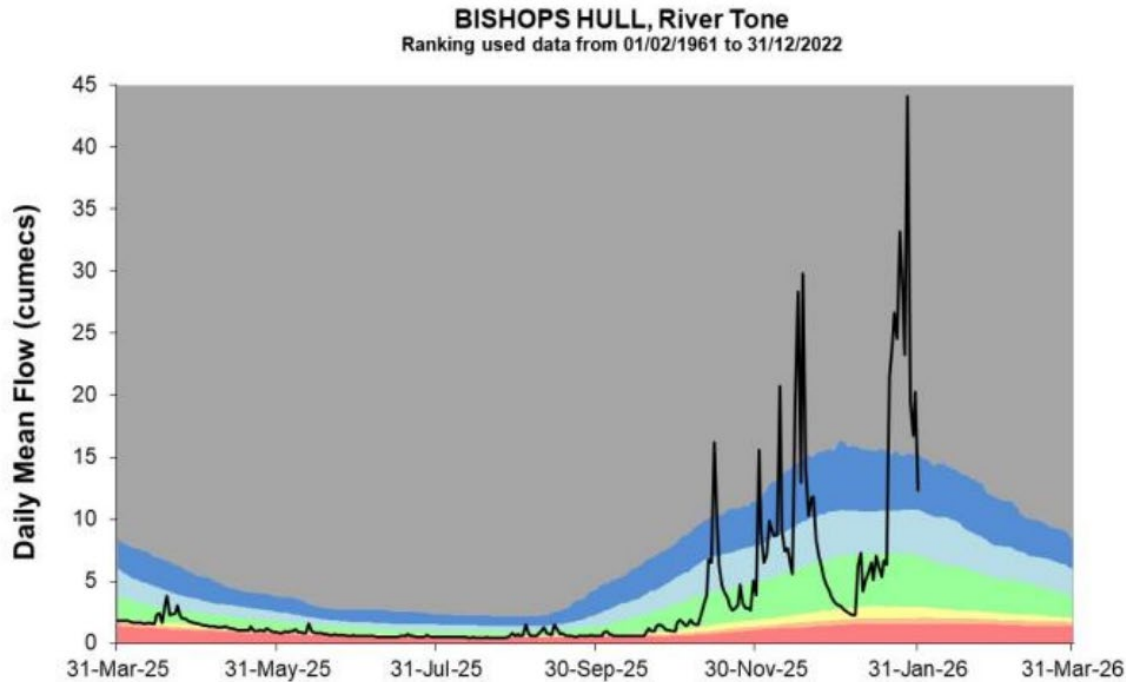
The image is a screenshot of the BBC News website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a 'Sign in' button, and a search bar labeled 'Search BBC'. Below this is a red banner with the word 'NEWS' in white. Underneath the banner is a horizontal menu with links for 'Home', 'UK', 'World', 'Business', 'Culture', 'Politics', 'Health', 'Tech', 'InDepth', 'BBC Verify', and 'Climate'. A 'More' button is on the right. Below the menu is another row of links for 'UK', 'England', 'N. Ireland', 'Scotland', 'Alba', 'Wales', 'Cymru', 'Isle of Man', 'Guernsey', 'Jersey', and 'Local News'. The main content area features a large black box on the left with the headline 'Storm Chandra brings danger to life flood warning as rain, wind and snow lash UK' and the date '© 27 January 2026'. To the right of the text is a photograph showing a flooded landscape with green fields and trees partially submerged in water.



## National Context:

- Map shows a snapshot of Flood Warnings on Tuesday 27th January.
- Most in South-West England.
- 110 Flood Warnings at peak
- 3 Severe Flood Warnings, indicating risk to life, were also issued to warn and protect communities.

# A Stormy and Wet Winter

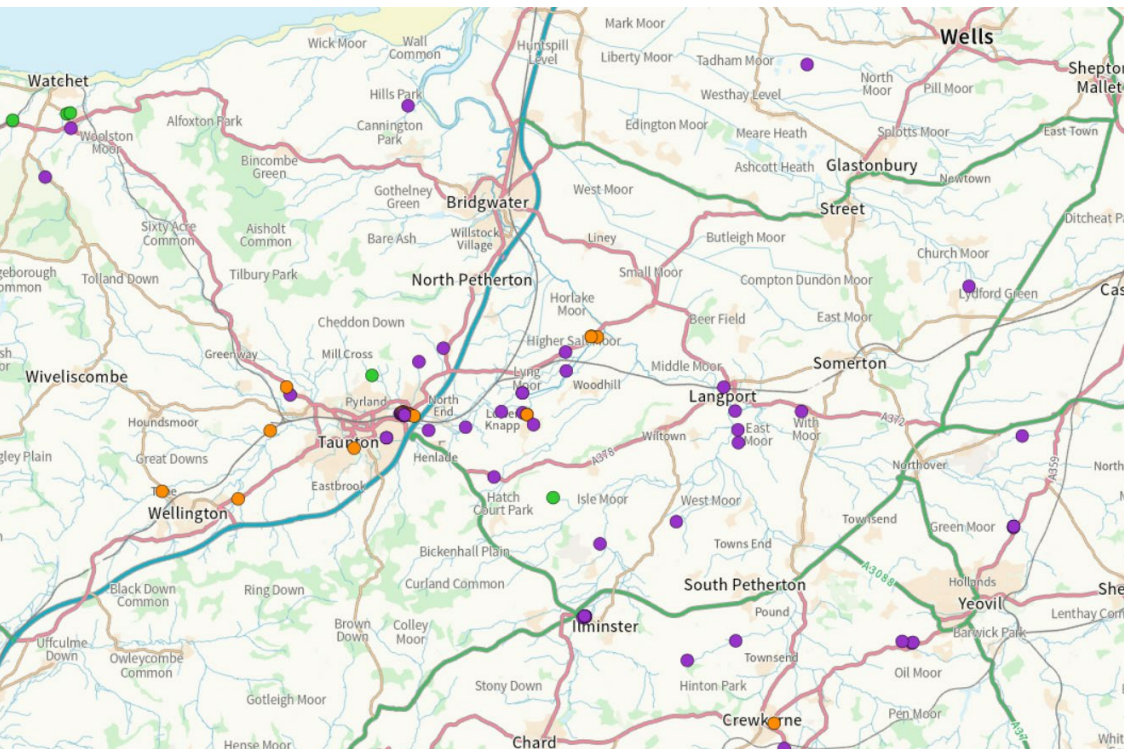


January 2026 was the second wettest on record (records go back to 1871) – second only to 2014. A third of this rain fell in only two days.

At the peak of Storm Chandra, 1.2 million cubic metres of water per hour was coming down the Parrett & Tone catchments.

February already had the month's normal rainfall by the 10<sup>th</sup>, and by the 19<sup>th</sup> had almost double the long-term average.

# Storm Chandra Internally Flooded Properties Reported

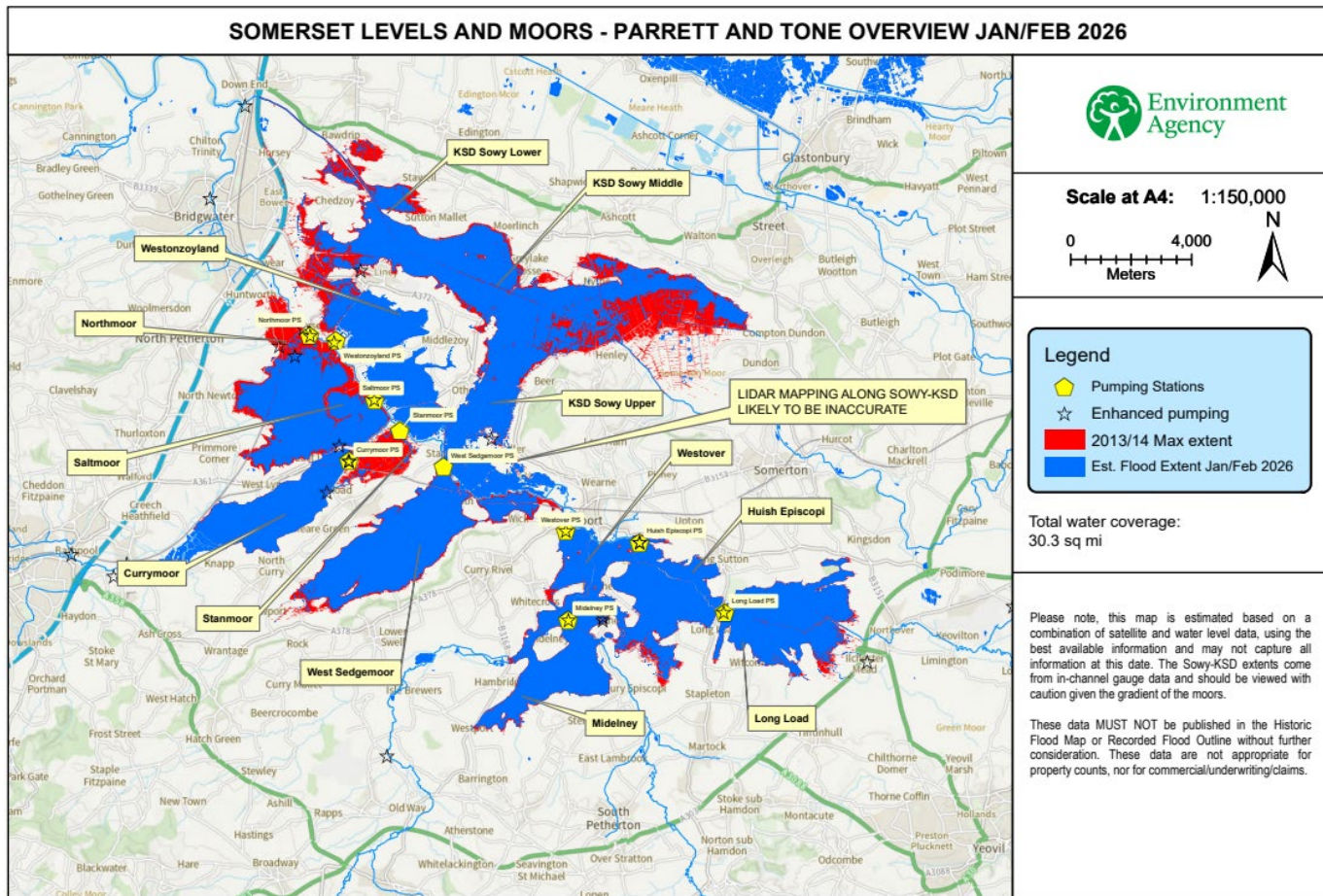


- Mostly individual properties: small cluster in Bathpool area (Taunton).
- Majority flooded for a few hours.
- 2860 properties have been protected by flood defences maintained/operated by risk management authorities (180 by trigger points pump deployment)

Type of Property	Count
<b>Residential</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Business</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>School</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Non for profit/social</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>82</b>



# Flood Extents



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- Map shows the extent of the flooding in the Somerset Levels and Moors v areas flooded in 2014.
- Similar storm pattern / volumes to 2014 but significantly fewer flooded properties
- Largely due to early action taken by partners and the deployment of a significant fleet of temporary pumps, as per the trigger points plan.

# Road Closures, Economic and Wider Impacts?

England | Local News | Somerset

'We've never seen flooding like this before'



The club was in the middle of preparing for its next game when the pitch flooded

Dan Ayers, Somerset and Clara Bullock

28 January 2026



Multiple road closures

M5 was unaffected

Disruption to railway between Taunton and Exeter

Trains cancelled between Castle Cary and Taunton

Impact on farming and agricultural businesses

Disruption to waste collection, deliveries and public transport

Disruption to businesses



Flooding near the Allerford Inn (Image: Annabelle Ash-Clark)

# Environmental Impacts

## What impact will the flooding have on wildlife?

- Wetland habitats and the species that live in them are adapted to periodic flooding.
- Prolonged, deep flooding event has an impact on wildlife.
- In 2014 Natural England published a '*An assessment of the effects of flooding on the wildlife and habitats of the Somerset Levels and Moors*'.



# Cost & Economic Impacts?



The image is a screenshot of a BBC News article. At the top, the BBC logo is visible on the left, and navigation links for 'Sign in', 'Home', 'News', 'Sport', 'Weather', and 'iPlayer' are on the right. Below the navigation is a red banner with the word 'NEWS' in white. Underneath the banner is a menu of news categories: 'Home', 'UK', 'World', 'Business', 'Culture', 'Politics', 'Health', 'Tech', 'InDepth', 'BBC Verify', and 'Climate'. Below this menu, the location 'England | Local News | Somerset' is displayed, with 'Somerset' underlined. The main headline of the article is 'Farmer will make 'no money this year' due to floods'. Below the headline is a photograph of a man, Mark Humphrey, standing in a green field with trees in the background. He is wearing a grey zip-up sweater and has his hands in his pockets. The article text is partially obscured by a white box on the left side of the screenshot.

**A dairy farmer has said his land lost about 30 acres of grass and he will not make any money this year because of extreme weather events.**

Mark Humphrey, based near Ilminster in Somerset, said two of his fields have had no yields since October 2023 because of last summer's drought and flooding over the winter.

Humphrey told **BBC Radio Somerset** farms across the county are affected and the impact will be felt for months to come.

feel the impact through this year

# Overview of the joint emergency response

- 1) Provide support for residents flooded on 26<sup>th</sup>/ 27<sup>th</sup> January
- 2) Manage impacts of large amounts of water in the lower catchments:
  - ongoing flood risk to low lying properties and land
  - disruption due to flooded and closed roads

Somerset Live [Follow](#) 17.9K Followers

## Major incident in Somerset remains ongoing after Storm Chandra

Story by Maxine Denton • 1w • [2 min read](#)



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## NEWS

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England Local News

## Major incident declared as floods hit homes and roads



# EA Pump Deployment and Water Management

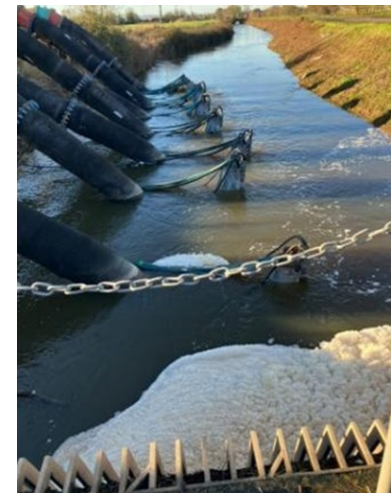
- Deployed additional pumps to 19 locations. This includes 28 ultra-high volume pumps as well as a large number of smaller pumps.
- Reprofiled banks to allow more water to flow into the rivers.
- Removed channel restrictions and constructed temporary bypass channels.
- Operated the Parrett Flood Relief Channel (Sowy/King's Sedgemoor Drain) with greater flows than in previous floods.
- Had extra staff on the ground 24 hours a day checking the flood assets and maximising the use of pumps.



# EA Activities



Ran community drop-ins, sent out regular briefings, and responded to a huge volume of enquiries.



# Community support on the ground



Community  
Information  
Points



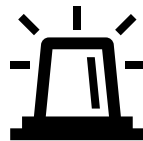
22 Daily  
Stakeholder  
written briefings



Door knocking  
to residents in  
Flood Warning  
areas



Regular  
contact with  
Flood Wardens



Rest Centre &  
Evacuation  
support & Search  
and Rescue  
Teams stood up



Flooded residents  
re-housed where  
required

## Stakeholder Information Sheet

Latest updates from Somerset Council, the Environment Agency, emergency services, NHS Somerset and partners

Date: 20 February 2026

To: All key stakeholders

### Major incident and flood response update

**Today we are issuing the final multi-agency update following the move to the recovery stage earlier this week.**

The weather forecast remains changeable and water levels are still impacting on some local roads. Following the reopening of the A361 on the Levels yesterday (Thursday 19 February), there was fresh flooding to the road early this morning as a result of accumulated rain during the middle part of the week, causing the spillway once again to top over and the road had to be closed again today (Friday 20 February).

We anticipate this situation remaining in flux for the next few weeks until there is a sustained period of dry weather. As soon as it is safe for drivers the road will be reopened.

Meanwhile, pumping operations are continuing and water levels more generally are receding. See the Environment Agency update below for further details.

[Please view previous updates here.](#)

We are encouraging anybody affected by flooding to please report it here: [Flood report - Self Service.](#)

**In an emergency residents should always call 999 immediately.**



Residents seeking advice and information outside Moorland Village Hall community information point.

# Multi-Agency Emergency Response

Major Incident declared: Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026  
Stood down on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Emergency response stood up for 23 days

- Daily coordination meetings including Police, Fire, Ambulance, Environment Agency, Met Office, Somerset Council, National Highways Coastguard, Utilities, Government Representative
- Cells to coordinate information sharing, humanitarian support, communications plus Search and Rescue.
- Two fly overs by Coastguard light aircraft to take aerial photographs

# Recovery: Planned Community Engagement

## Via Local Community Networks including

- Crewkerne and Ilminster (18 March)
- Levels and Moors (26 March)
- Avalon and Poldens (23 April)
- Hestercombe (10 June)

## Community Led Events

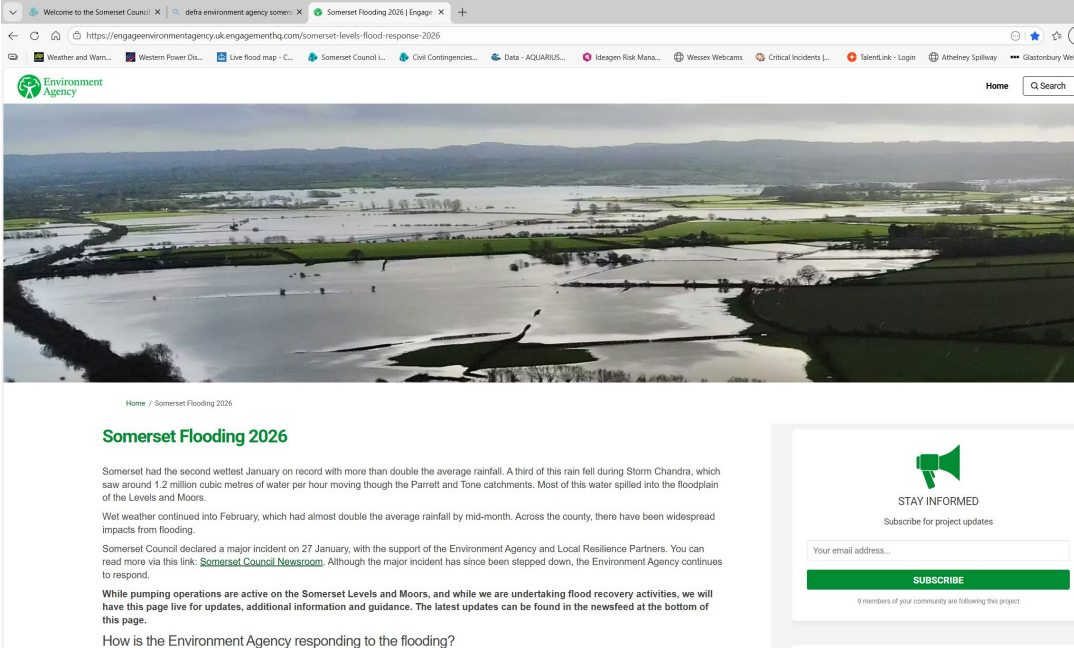
- Burrowbridge (24 March)
- Bathpool (30 April)

## SRA board meetings

- 20 March and later dates

## New EA website:

[Somerset Flooding 2026 | Engage Environment Agency](https://www.environmentagency.gov.uk/somerset-flooding-2026)



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the 'Somerset Flooding 2026' page on the Engage Environment Agency website. The page features a large aerial photograph of a flooded landscape with green fields and a winding river. Below the image, the text reads: 'Somerset Flooding 2026', 'Somerset had the second wettest January on record with more than double the average rainfall. A third of this rain fell during Storm Chandra, which saw around 1.2 million cubic metres of water per hour moving through the Parrett and Tone catchments. Most of this water spilled into the floodplain of the Levels and Moors.', 'Wet weather continued into February, which had almost double the average rainfall by mid-month. Across the county, there have been widespread impacts from flooding.', 'Somerset Council declared a major incident on 27 January, with the support of the Environment Agency and Local Resilience Partners. You can read more via this link: [Somerset Council Newsroom](#). Although the major incident has since been stepped down, the Environment Agency continues to respond.', 'While pumping operations are active on the Somerset Levels and Moors, and while we are undertaking flood recovery activities, we will have this page live for updates, additional information and guidance. The latest updates can be found in the newsfeed at the bottom of this page.', and 'How is the Environment Agency responding to the flooding?'. On the right side of the page, there is a 'STAY INFORMED' section with a megaphone icon, a 'Subscribe for project updates' button, and a text input field for an email address.

# NEWS

Home | UK | World | Business | Culture | Politics | Health | Tech | InDepth | BBC Verify | Climate

England | Local News | Somerset

## 'I won't give up on flooded areas', says minister

Flood Minister visits Somerset  
10 February  
2026



Emma Hardy says Somerset will get £75m in flood support

# Next Steps

## **Recovery**

- Asset repair
- Planned community engagement
- Debriefs and lessons capture (including review of communications)
- Multi-agency recovery process ends with closure report

## **Investigations and technical considerations**

Section 19 reports etc

Trigger points and pumping capacity

## **Strategy**

Implications for the SRA

Opportunities for SRA funded projects

## **Reporting**

Future SRA Board meetings